

To:  
NHS Provider Trust Chief Executives  
CCG Accountable Officers  
CCG Clinical Leads

NHS England Publications Gateway Reference 05218

28 April 2016

Dear colleague,

#### JUNIOR DOCTORS INDUSTRIAL ACTION

We are writing personally to thank you and your staff for the exceptional way the NHS pulled together over the last several days to ensure safe urgent and emergency care during this week's strike action.

Hospital consultants, nurses, GPs, paramedics, pharmacists, therapists, social services, and many other staff, all went the extra mile to safeguard patients at a time of unprecedented withdrawal of junior doctor emergency cover. NHS managers alongside medical, clinical and nursing directors ensured effective operational plans were in place throughout the country.

There are important good practice lessons to be drawn from this week's events, so NHS England's Emergency Preparedness Resilience and Response (EPRR) team, working with colleagues from NHS Improvement, will now be contacting you to gather and share these insights.

There will also be spillover consequences, with over 125,000 patients having had their needed care deferred from this week into the days and weeks ahead.

Unfortunately it also appears that further industrial action is possible, including the possibility floated by the BMA of a full and indefinite withdrawal of junior doctor labour. This would clearly have wide ranging impacts on patients. If drawn out for an extended period, there would likely be major implications for elective care and urgent care and the ability of hospitals to keep certain departments and services running.

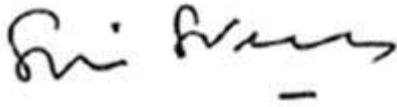
In accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act and related statutory provisions, NHS England, provider trusts and the wider NHS therefore now need to assess and prepare for this possibility and other operational scenarios.

To this end, we are writing to ask you to refresh your local contingency plans in the next fortnight to consider the action you would need to take should intensified and extended industrial action occur. Specifically we would like you to consider how you would

respond in the event of an indefinite withdrawal of junior doctor labour for 24-hour emergency and elective care, for 24-hour elective care only and for 12-hour emergency care. NHS England's EPRR team in conjunction with NHS Improvement will be in touch with you to support this work.

In the meantime, once again, we thank you and your teams for your continuing leadership at this challenging time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Stevens', with a horizontal line underneath.

**Simon Stevens**  
Chief Executive  
NHS England

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Mackey', with a large loop at the end.

**Jim Mackey**  
Chief Executive  
NHS Improvement